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MIDWEEK EDITION | WWW.ROCHELLENEWS-LEADER.COM

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13, 2024 \$1.25

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Montgomery served in Vietnam

Dixon Montgomery of Rochelle served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1969-70. **Pages 4-5**

WEATHER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
52 38	54 43
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
56 39	57 40

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OBITUARIES

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INSERTS

• FARM & FLEET

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DAR presents flag flown over Constitution Hall in DC to Flagg Township Museum

‘When a flag is in disrepair, we want to replace it and have that pride in the United States’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Thursday, Nov. 7, the Rochelle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented a flag that has been flown over Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. to the Flagg Township Museum in Rochelle.

The museum’s previous flag was in need of replacement and was taken down Nov. 7 and will be retired. The Rochelle DAR received the new flag via a grant program through the national DAR organization’s flag committee, Rochelle Chapter Regent Debby Katzman said. Constitution Hall is the DAR’s national headquarters.

“We could apply for a grant for a local public place that had a flag in need of replacement and retirement,” Katzman said. “Bea Chaplin, our flag chair, noticed the flag here was a little tattered and we nominated the Flagg Township Museum when we wrote for the grant, and we received it.”

The flag was raised and flown over Constitution Hall for a day in honor of the Flagg Township Museum before it was taken down and sent to the



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Thursday, Nov. 7, the Rochelle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented a flag that has been flown over Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. to the Flagg Township Museum in Rochelle.

Rochelle DAR.

“The museum now has a flag that flew over Washington D.C.,” Katzman said. “That’s pretty cool. It’s national recognition. We’ve been recognized nationally in the past. And it’s just the right thing to do. When a flag is in disrepair, we want to replace it and have that pride in the United States.”

The honor the Rochelle DAR and Flagg Township Museum received will be on the national DAR site for Flags of the United States to inspire others to do it in their own communities. A DAR chapter can only receive a flag once.

The DAR and the Flagg Township Museum have

aligning principles. The DAR’s principles are historical preservation, education and patriotism. Katzman said the Nov. 7 event checked all of those boxes. Museum Director Jan Devore agreed.

“It’s very timely to raise this flag before Veterans Day,” Devore said. “It’s national recognition. I think the strength of the local DAR chapter made a difference in being able to get this. I’m a member. The chapter taking the initiative is what made it happen. We’re very fortunate they thought of the museum. It’s a natural partnership between the museum and the DAR. I think there’s a commonality.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Thursday, Nov. 7, the City of Rochelle presented a facade grant check for \$5,000 to the owners of the Best Building at 1201 S. 7th St. in Rochelle.

City awards facade grant check to Best Building

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Thursday, Nov. 7, the City of Rochelle presented a facade grant check for \$5,000 to the owners of the Best Building at 1201 S. 7th St. in Rochelle.

The facade grant program covers half the cost of any improvements made to business fronts in town with a limit of \$5,000. The improvements included upgrading exterior lighting and the addition of a new lighted outdoor sign. The Best Building rents out office space to various businesses as well as a space for meetings, conferences, classes and events. The new sign showcases each business that resides in the building. Co-Owners Valesia Best and Nancy Russell said.

Best said the building’s

previous sign was in disrepair and it was time for an upgrade. The new sign lights up at night.

“We did it for our tenants,” Russell said. “It’s a good advertisement for them to bring attention to their businesses and the building.”

Russell said it meant a lot to her building to have access to the facade grant program, and the work likely couldn’t have taken place without it. There are currently eight tenants in the Best Building and there are plans in place for more improvements such as lighting and sprucing up the inside.

Best said she enjoys working in a community where small businesses are valued and that the city is willing to help them succeed.

See GRANT page 2

Small Business Bingo event raises \$5,555

Funds raised on Nov. 7 to benefit HOPE of Ogle County, Shining Star

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Small Business Bingo held its first event of the fall on Thursday, Nov. 7 at the hangar at Chicagoland Skydiving Center in Rochelle and raised \$5,555 that will be split between HOPE of Ogle County and Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center, Event Organizer and AP Massage Therapy Owner Ashley Patrick said.

“It was the biggest event we’ve had so far,” Patrick said. “We did our best to keep track of the attendance, but it became too much to follow. Our attendance was more than what we’ve had in the past. The Flight Deck Bar & Grill staff was amazing at accommodating us and making sure we had space and chairs and tables.”

Small Business Bingo held a spring event on April 4 and raised \$4,105 for the Rochelle Area Community Foundation and The Kitchen



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Small Business Bingo held its first event of the fall on Thursday, Nov. 7 at the hangar at Chicagoland Skydiving Center in Rochelle and raised \$5,555 that will be split between HOPE of Ogle County and Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center, Event Organizer and AP Massage Therapy Owner Ashley Patrick said.

Table. The fundraiser raised \$18,853 for area nonprofits in 2023 with its

inaugural four events. Patrick came up with the idea of bingo nights in the com-

munity with prizes donated by local businesses to raise money for area nonprofits

last year.

See BINGO page 2

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LOCAL NEWS

BINGO: Fundraising event held Nov. 7 raises \$5,555 for local groups

From page 1

The four events in fall 2023 raised money for Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center, HOPE of Ogle County, Foundation for Focus House, and The Kitchen Table.

The fundraiser will hold two more events on Dec. 5 (to benefit Focus House and the Rochelle Township High School Education Foundation) and Jan. 2 (to benefit the Hub City Senior Center and Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County) at the same location and time of 6-8 p.m. Small Business Bingo will help nine nonprofits this year.

"For me, it's something that is so fulfilling," Patrick said. "It's a fundraiser, but I've always wanted it to be more of a community project. We're bringing the community together for the same mission. So many local people and organizations are participating and interacting to do something to benefit our community. I intended it to be more than a fundraiser. I love being able to spread the funds out to different nonprofits and spreading the word about what these organizations do in our community. Maybe it helps them in the future with



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Small Business Bingo held a spring event on April 4 and raised \$4,105 for the Rochelle Area Community Foundation and The Kitchen Table. The fundraiser raised \$18,853 for area nonprofits in 2023 with its inaugural four events.

things like donations or volunteers because more people know."

The event held Nov. 7 also included a food drive for the Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, where goods were collected for the organization's holiday food boxes.

The venue costs were covered for the 2024 events by the Rochelle Rotary Club, the City of Rochelle and Holcomb Bank, Patrick said. Jessica Morris of Edward Jones will sponsor the bingo cards for each event. The events are aided by sponsorships and volunteers.

"I run these events with a very small team," Patrick said. "I'm very fortunate that I've had some help along the way. Getting the space ready takes a tremendous amount of work. We

had volunteers to sell raffle tickets and bingo cards and get people into the door. It's a sense of community, with people wanting to jump in and help in any way they can."

Patrick has enjoyed seeing the event grow in attendance and funds raised over its two years after it started as an idea.

"To think back to planning the first event when I didn't know whether I'd get 100 people to attend and whether people would be receptive to it and excited about it, it's a feeling I can't describe to be here now," Patrick said. "It still blows my mind and we're on our sixth event. I feel now that the sky's the limit and people will continue to support it and it will continue to grow. It's exciting to see."

GRANT: City of Rochelle presents check to Best Building at 1201 S. 7th St.

From page 1

The check was presented to Best and Russell by City of Rochelle Community Development Director Michelle Pease and Community Development Specialist Michelle

Knight.

"I think it's really important to spread out the funds," Pease said. "That's why we only allow a business to get a facade grant once every five years. We want everybody to get some

assistance to be able to do the upgrades they want. And it creates a visible appeal to the buildings and in the community. It's great to see the improvements and that the building has come back to life in recent years."

The 2025 From The Heart Cash Calendars are NOW AVAILABLE!!

The proceeds of the sale of the calendars benefit our From The Heart recipients: Pegasus Special Riders, Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, HOPE, Focus House, Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center, CASA, Rochelle Area Community Foundation, Community Action Network, Hub City Senior Center & Rochelle Rotary.



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DAR presents flag flown over Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. to Flagg Township Museum

On Nov. 7, the Rochelle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented a flag that has been flown over Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. to the Flagg Township Museum. (Photo by Jeff Helfrich)

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Rochelle Rescue Mission
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Girl Scouts ~ #409, #1870
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LOCAL NEWS

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

OREGON — On Nov. 3 at approximately 10:40 p.m. the Ogle County Sheriff's Office and Oregon Police Department were involved in a pursuit on a black Ford Fusion. Timothy P. Valdivia Jr, 32, of Oregon, was later arrested and issued the following citations: aggravated fleeing/attempting to elude a police officer-involves disobedience of two or more traffic devices, disregarding an official traffic control device, driving while driver's license is suspended, failure to signal, operating a vehicle with expired registration, operation of an uninsured motor vehicle, reckless driving, suspended registration, and disobeying a stop sign. Valdivia Jr was issued his citations and given a notice to appear for a future court date.

On Nov. 4 at approximately 1:40 p.m. deputies responded to the intersection of U.S. Route 52 and Freeport Road for a two-vehicle accident involving injuries. After an investigation, it was learned that a silver Toyota sedan was traveling eastbound on Route 52 when it struck a White Ford SUV that was southbound on Freeport Road. It was learned that the Ford, which was operated by Maria C Reyes-Alvarado, 38, of Beloit, disobeyed the stop sign on Freeport Road before proceeding through the intersection. Reyes-Alvarado was cited for disobeying a stop sign. The single occupant of the Toyota was transported to an area hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

ROCHELLE POLICE REPORT

ROCHELLE — On Nov. 5 at 7:11 p.m. Kyler Lara, 22, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a notice to appear and was given a Dec. 13

Rockford court date. Deputies were assisted at the scene by Polo Fire and EMS and the Polo Police Department.

On Nov. 5 at 9:49 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 2,000 block of West Mud Creek Road. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Taylor Ann Kurtzweg, 30, of Rockford, for driving while license suspended. Kurtzweg was also cited for an inoperable registration light and operating a vehicle with no insurance. Kurtzweg was released with a notice to appear for her citations and provided a future court date.

On Nov. 6 at 10 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 88 at mile marker 80 eastbound on a 2022 Toyota Highlander. After a short investigation, deputies arrested Carla Sullivan, 52, of Chicago, for driving while license suspended. Sullivan was released on a notice to appear.

On Nov. 6 at approximately 12:03 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 6,500 block of North River Road. After a brief investigation deputies arrested Jerquion M. Johnson, 25, of Rockford, for driving while driver's license is suspended. Johnson was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was given a notice to appear for a future court date.

On Nov. 7 at approximately 1:17 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on a silver Toyota sedan in the 3,000 block of South Lowell Park Road. After a brief investigation deputies arrested Axel I.

Trinidad-Martinez, 19, of Dixon for no valid driver's license. Trinidad-Martinez was also cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Trinidad-Martinez was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On Nov. 7 at 9:59 p.m. deputies responded to a call of domestic battery in the 100 block of Harvest Glenn Drive, Davis Junction. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested a 16-year-old juvenile male for three counts of domestic battery. The juvenile was transported to the Kane County Juvenile Detention Center and held pending an appearance before a judge.

On Nov. 8 at approximately 6 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the 6,500 block of North River Road. After investigation, deputies placed Steven E. Currier, 58, of Oregon under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Currier was also cited for improper lane usage, registration lights, and unlawful possession of cannabis by driver. Currier was issued his citations, released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On Nov. 9 at 5:12 p.m. deputies were dispatched to a domestic in the 4,000 block of South Skare Road. After investigation, deputies placed a 17-year-old male juvenile of Rochelle under arrest for domestic battery. The male juvenile was transported to Kane County Juvenile Correctional Center where he was held pending a court appearance in front

of a judge. A 21-year-old male at the residence was transported to Rochelle Community Hospital for minor injuries.

On Nov. 9 at 7:45 p.m. deputies responded to a 911 hang up call in the 900 block of West Illinois Route 64. After a brief investigation, Denise R. Wagoner, 38, of Mt. Morris, was arrested on an active Ogle County warrant for criminal damage to property and an active DeKalb County failure to appear warrant. Wagoner was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held pending an appearance before a judge.

On Nov. 10 at approximately 1 p.m. the Ogle County Sheriff's Office received a report of a possible intoxicated driver traveling on Illinois Route 52 from Carroll County. Deputies with the assistance of the Polo Police Department located the reported blue Toyota Camry at the Fairmount Cemetery operated by Ryan Pickert, 25, of Rockford. After conducting an investigation, Pickert was placed under arrest and cited for driving under the influence of alcohol, driving under the influence of alcohol with a BAC over .08, and illegal transportation of alcohol. Pickert was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was processed and released on a notice to appear.

On Nov. 10 at approximately 4:20 p.m. deputies with the assistance of the Illinois State Police responded to the 100 block of Dayflower Circle in the Rolling Meadows Trailer

Park for the report of a domestic disturbance. After conducting an investigation, Samuel Eineichner, 36, of Davis Junction, was placed under arrest for domestic battery and interfering with reporting a domestic battery. Eineichner was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he remains pending an appearance before a judge.

On Nov. 11 at approximately 3:38 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the west intersection of Lowell Park Road and Oregon Trail Road. After investigation, deputies learned that a black Hyundai Elantra was driven by Jackson Bartelt, 18, of Byron. Bartelt was traveling northbound on Lowell Park Road when he failed to negotiate a curve and traveled off of the west side of the roadway. The Hyundai then struck a ditch embankment before rolling several times and coming to rest approximately 63 yards northwest of the intersection in a field. The Hyundai sustained heavy damage in the accident. Bartelt was transported to KSB Hospital for non-life-threatening injuries. Jackson was later issued citations for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident, improper lane usage, and driving under the influence of alcohol. Bartelt was released on notice to appear at the hospital and given a future court date.

On Nov. 11 at 5:54 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at West Sterling

Road and Unity Road. As a result, deputies arrested Sarah L. Brown, 50, of Dixon on an outstanding Lee County warrant for contempt of court. Brown was transported to the Ogle County Jail in lieu of bond. Brown was issued a verbal warning for equipment violation.

On Nov. 11 at 7:44 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 2,000 block of South Illinois Route 2. As a result, deputies arrested Bryant C. Johnson, 60, of Rock Falls on an outstanding Lee County warrant for contempt of court. Johnson was transported to the Ogle County Jail in lieu of bond. Johnson was issued a verbal warning for loud exhaust.

On Nov. 11 at approximately 12:52 p.m. deputies performed a traffic stop on a vehicle in the 3,000 block of North Illinois Route 2 for a passing violation. The driver of the vehicle, 33-year-old Alexavier J. Lockridge of Chicago, was arrested for driving while license revoked and also cited for passing in a no passing zone. Lockridge also had a warrant out of Boone County for failure to appear on a leaving the scene of a traffic accident. Lockridge was transported to the Ogle County Jail and held on the Boone County warrant. Lockridge was given a notice to appear for the Ogle County driving while revoked charge.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 6 at 5:14 a.m. Kayembe Mukeba, 47, of Rockford was cited for speeding 50 in a 30 miles and expired registration. He signed a notice to appear

and was given a Dec. 13 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 6 at 10:15 a.m. Arlyn D. Van Dyke, 77, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured vehicle and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident. He signed a notice to appear and was given a Dec. 13

Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 6 at 9 p.m. Amy E. Evans, 57, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured vehicle. She signed a notice to appear and was given a Dec. 13 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 6 at 9:53 p.m. Edward C. Villalobos, 23,

of Rochelle was cited for disregarding a stop sign. He signed a notice to appear and was given a Dec. 13 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 6 at 6:55 p.m. Darline Contreras, 27, of Rochelle was cited for expired registration and operating an uninsured

vehicle. She signed a notice to appear and was given a Dec. 13 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 8 at 1:20 p.m. Susan Carter, 70, of West Brooklyn was cited for speeding 54 in a 35 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a Dec. 20 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 8 at 10:37 p.m. a 16-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for speeding 66 in a 45 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Dec. 20 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 9 at 2:22 a.m. Cayden E. Moore, 18, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Dec. 20 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 10 at 2:26 a.m. Christopher L. Reed, 30, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while license revoked. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Dec. 20 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 10 at 4:02 p.m. Randy Reeves, 57, of Rochelle was arrested for violation of bond conditions and transferred.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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Dixon Montgomery of Rochelle served with

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Dixon Montgomery of Rochelle served the United States Army from 1969-1970 during the Vietnam War.

After graduating from Rochelle Township High School, Montgomery was drafted into the U.S. Army in July 1969. He was sent to Fort Polk in Louisiana for basic training and spent eight weeks there in the middle of summer. After toting around a 40-pound rucksack and taking 3-4-mile-long marches, Montgomery decided he didn't want to stay in infantry.

At the end of his basic training, Montgomery was sent to Fort Knox in Kentucky for training as a tank gunner. He spent six months there and was then sent to Vietnam, and assigned as a tank gunner to A troop, first squadron, first armored cavalry with base camp in Chu Lai, Vietnam. Montgomery served there for a little over a year as a tank gunner and went on combat patrols around the area of Quang Nhon Province, which was right up close to the DMV in northern South Vietnam.

When Montgomery first joined the first cavalry, he was a tank gunner assistant and part of a four-man crew aboard a Sheridan tank, which were about three-fourths the size of the World War II M-1 tank. His responsibility was to load rounds into the tank's main gun and reload the 30-caliber machine gun. After three months assisting, he moved over to the right-hand seat inside the tank where the tank gunner sat.

"That is where the surreal part of Vietnam was, when I looked through the telescope out into woods and hills where people were shooting at us," Montgomery said. "Serving in Vietnam was a surreal experience. Most of the time I felt like I was in a movie rather than doing something real. It was just so crazy. I made very close friendships with the guys I served with. I think because everybody starts out the same: Feeling alone, afraid, and needing a friend. So good friends were made easily. Going off to war isn't something I would wish on anyone. But I did make some of the best friendships I've ever had in my life while serving."

One day while on patrol, Montgomery was moderately wounded when his tank hit a landmine. He called that "a constant worry" while on patrol.

And then in September of 1970 when he had two months left in Vietnam, Montgomery's tank was hit in an ambush by a rocket. Dixon suffered extreme shrapnel injuries, which resulted in the loss of his eyesight, along with hearing loss, facial scarring and other injuries all over his body.

For the next two years, Montgomery went through a series of reconstructive operations and went to a six-month program at the Hines VA Hospital for blind rehabilitation training. It was there that he met a woman named Mary Ann, who later became his wife and the best friend he's ever had.

"When I first came home from Vietnam blind with facial scarring, I was afraid I'd probably be spending the rest of my life alone," Montgomery said. "But Mary Ann and I hit it off from the very first time we met and slowly over several months became close. I ended up marrying her after about two years of being back home. We've enjoyed a wonderful life together. She was always prompting me to move forward and go after some of my dreams."

After Vietnam, Montgomery returned to Rochelle, where he found a better experience than a lot of veterans of that war did amid the political climate at the time. "You often hear about all the horror stories that



Dixon Montgomery of Rochelle served the United States Army from 1969-1970 during the Vietnam War. After graduating from Rochelle Township High School, he was drafted into the U.S. Army in July 1969. He was sent to Fort Polk in Louisiana for basic training and spent eight weeks there in the middle of summer. After toting around a 40-pound rucksack and taking 3-4-mile-long marches, Montgomery decided he didn't want to stay in infantry.

Vietnam veterans faced when they came home from service, but I was very lucky to come from Rochelle," Montgomery said. "People back here were very welcoming and supportive of me. They made me feel loved."

Dixon and Mary Ann welcomed a daughter named Susan who now lives in Manhattan, New York as an actor and playwright. The couple spent time traveling to visit friends and family in Colorado and California. One dream Mary Ann pushed Dixon to pursue was opening a record store.

"I opened The Great Obispo Record Store here in Rochelle on 6th Street in 1976," Montgomery said. "Being a huge rock and roll fan myself, playing even some small part in the industry is something I still treasure to this day."

Montgomery thanked his wife and daughter for their support of him over the years as he dealt with life and the aftermath of his injuries.

"Mary Ann and Susan have been so important to me in keeping my head together and keeping me propped up when I needed it," Montgomery said. "Their love and tenderness along with all the love I've received from my many friends within Rochelle makes me feel like a very lucky Vietnam veteran. The support of family and friends is so necessary. To be able to accept that support of family and friends is so necessary."

Over the years, Montgomery enjoyed visits to RTHS for its annual Veterans Day breakfast and to speak to classes and assemblies. He told stories about Vietnam and showed photos he took while he was there. The support RTHS showed veterans has meant a great deal to Montgomery and he called speaking with students on those days "precious memories."

"Serving in Vietnam was a surreal experience. Most of the time I felt like I was in a movie rather than doing something real. It was just so crazy. I made very close friendships with the guys I served with..."

Dixon Montgomery

Montgomery, now 75 years old, said speaking to students and local social organizations was cathartic for him. While speaking to the News-Leader on Oct. 31, 2024 with Veterans Day approaching, he remarked that he remembers every Veterans Day breakfast and assembly at RTHS and every phone call he's gotten from someone thanking him for his service.

"I've had so many young people come up to me five, 10, 15, or 20 years later and tell me that they remembered me from those assemblies," Montgomery said. "That's truly gratifying. It seems to me that I have a lot of people thank me for my service all the time. But I feel I have so many people to thank for how I've been treated all these years here in Rochelle. I've never felt like I was abandoned."

Honoring Our American Hero is a series that will print twice a month in the News-Leader. If you know an American Hero you would like to have featured, contact Jeff Helfrich at jhelfrich@rochellenews-leader.com or call 815-561-2151.

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American Hero

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(NEWS-LEADER FILE PHOTOS)

uating from Rochelle Township High School, Montgomery was drafted into the U.S. Army in July 1969. He was sent and a 40-pound rucksack and taking 3-4-mile-long marches, Montgomery decided he didn't want to stay in infantry.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

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LOCAL VIEWS

Why I try to be uncertain about everything

I'M uncertain about most things, including politics. I'm trying to stay that way. A democracy dies when its people fail to question their political beliefs.

I came out of the womb a non-believer, as nearly as I can tell. I struggled throughout childhood with the seeming necessity and yet impossibility of religious faith. My decision at age 18 to embrace my lack of faith started me on a quest for guidelines — the rules of evidence, so to speak — to follow in the pursuit of truth.

I found a partial answer in science's methods for proving and disproving beliefs and opinions, but I discovered that science itself reveals how little we can know.

Leading scientists acknowledge the chasm between us and reality. "We will always be mired in error," Astronomer Carl Sagan warned in his book,

"The Demon-Haunted World." Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman declared, "People search for certainty. But there is no certainty."

The causes of this dilemma include language, complexity, and, most of all, psychology.

We can start with language. Scientists have struggled since the beginning to find a way to make a solid connection between words and reality. All have failed.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, in its philosophy of language section, traces the history of that hopeless quest. It reflects the fact that words aren't a direct copy of reality and don't mean the same thing to everyone. We distort reality simply by trying to describe it with hazy words like liberal, conservative, fascism, and socialism.

Uncertainty also reigns in the scientific theory known as chaos. It's the

source of the famous butterfly effect, the fanciful idea that a butterfly flapping its wings in Brazil can cause a tornado in Texas. Tiny events interact with others in complex situations, and spiral unpredictably into huge consequences.

We instinctively resist the idea that important events can be so random and seemingly chaotic. We cling to the belief that we can understand the past and control the future. Nassim Taleb, in his book, "The Black Swan," explores this delusion and its harmful effects.

It arises from the brains that nature has imposed on us. Psychological researcher Daniel Kahneman's book, "Thinking Fast and Slow," based on 40 years of research, puts to rest the idea that humans are, by

and large, rational animals.

The human mind is unable to know reality directly, and must instead create beliefs about the world based on its experiences. It develops explanatory stories that are familiar, comfortable, seem to hold together, and demand a minimum of mental effort. It calls on logic only when a belief is under threat, looking for evidence to defend it and ignoring facts that might weaken it.

The less we know, the easier it is to support our stories. "It is the consistency of the information that matters for a good story, not its completeness," says Mr. Kahneman. "Indeed, you will often find that knowing little makes it easier to fit everything you know into a coherent pattern."

Mr. Talib puts it this way, "Our comforting

conviction that the world makes sense rests on a secure foundation; our almost unlimited ability to ignore our ignorance."

None of us are capable of escaping these mental limitations. Mr. Kahneman acknowledges that about himself. We can overcome our prejudices only briefly and with great effort.

If we could be truly certain about our political opinions, we wouldn't need to tolerate those of others. But democracy requires us to acknowledge that everyone is wrong in some way. We trust that, in an uncertain world, we can come to the best achievable solutions through open discussion and compromise.

I and my liberal friends need to keep the importance of uncertainty in mind as we taste the bitter fruit of this year's election. We must, if we're to learn from it, open ourselves to the possibilities in the ideas of those on the other side.

We must most of all avoid the temptation to console ourselves with a sense of superiority to the followers of Donald Trump.

A disregard for uncertainty presents a different danger for Republicans: an arrogant confidence that leads to overreach and a backlash against them in the 2026 and 2028 elections.

There will be battles to be fought, but both sides must, if we're to reunite and move forward, acknowledge, against all our instincts, our incapable predicament: The only thing that's certain in this world is that everything is uncertain.

Lowell Harp is a retired school psychologist who served school districts in Ogle County. His column runs monthly in The Ogle County Life. For previous articles, you can follow him on Facebook at <http://fb.me/lowellharp>.



Lowell Harp

Airlines offer many perks and discounts for the military community

I served for 33 years in the United States Military. As the former commanding officer of the Navy's largest aviation training installation at Naval Air Station Pensacola, I know firsthand the deep relationships between military aviation and our airline industry.

The airline industry has been one of the leading employers for America's service members, employing more than 50,000 veterans. I've been fortunate to fly all over the world for both military and personal reasons, but no matter where I travel, I always know I'll be treated with kindness and dignity when I fly on a U.S. airline. U.S. airlines offer discounts, waive fees, and provide many other perks for active duty and veter-

ans alike. To make the most of these opportunities, active-duty personnel and veterans should check out the military benefits airlines offer before finalizing travel arrangements.

Discounted fares and vacation packages Many airlines offer discounted fares for travel itineraries -- including leisure and vacation. Alaska, American, Hawaiian, JetBlue, and United all offer reduced fares for the military community through a partnership with WeSalute+ — a benefits and discount program for active duty and veterans, and their immediate families. Southwest also offers lower fares not available to the public if you call ahead. Several airlines even offer discounts on vacation packages. Delta Vacations

offers military discounts up to \$200 on a flight-and-hotel package. American Airlines, meanwhile, offers 10% discounts for vacation packages through WeSalute+.

Check extra bags for free (and bring your pets too!) Most airlines waive baggage fees for members of the military community. Alaska, American, and JetBlue offer up to five free checked bags per flight, for example, depending on whether the flight is for duty or leisure. Many airlines also let members of the military community ship their pets — a benefit not typically offered to the general public. This is something

we took full advantage of when we were stationed overseas in Belgium. Active-duty servicemembers who are relocating or traveling on orders should check airline policies to see if their four-legged friends can fly for free. Semper Fido!

An enhanced airport experience Airports can get chaotic, especially around the holidays. Members of the military community, however, may be eligible for a little

extra comfort, convenience, and relaxation. Most airlines offer priority boarding to members of the military and their families. Early boarding offers a chance to secure

overhead storage for carry-ons and get settled into a seat before the single-file procession of other passengers starts down the narrow aisle. We sure appreciated this when we were moving overseas with two small children, two cats, and more bags than a discount shopper on black Friday!

Military travelers flying with American, United, or Alaska Airlines can enjoy airline clubs and lounges before boarding, depending on the airport and availability. Whether it's to hang with the family, find a nook to read, grab a snack, or grab a catnap, these lounges offer a quiet space to relax before boarding.

Know what deals, discounts, and perks are available before you book!

Traveling can be stressful for anyone. To relieve stress and save both time and money, members of the military community should make a point of looking into the discounts, perks, and amenities available to them before they book. Our airlines offer these discounts because they appreciate and value the sacrifices our servicemembers and their families make every day -- something a great number of airline employees have experienced as veterans themselves.

Captain Tim "Lucky" Kinsella, USN (Ret), is the executive director of the Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz Center for Leadership at the University of West Florida. He served 33 years in the United States Navy.



Tim Kinsella

How to contact government officials

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Rochelle News-Leader encourages responsible letters to the editor on subjects of interest to our readers. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include address and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Neither the street address nor phone number will be printed. Letters should be

typed or legibly handwritten, and no anonymous letters will be published. Any letters from boards or organizations must include at least one name of an individual. Any criticism of public officials should be limited to issues related strictly to their position or actions made in office, as personal attacks will not be published. Letters involving private disputes between the writer and a business will not be published. Political endorsements will be published,

however letters from candidates endorsing themselves will not be printed. Letters may be dropped at the News-Leader office (211 IL Route 38 East), mailed to the News-Leader (P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068) or e-mailed (news@rochellenews-leader.com.)

The News-Leader reserves the right to edit or reject any letter to the editor for any reason, and letters chosen for publication do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper.

In celebration of American Education Week (Nov. 18-22), the Rochelle Elementary Education Association proudly donated \$500 to The Kitchen Table. Representing certified teachers and staff in the Rochelle Elementary District, each year, the association makes a contribution to a community group dedicated to serving students. Thank you to The Kitchen Table for your invaluable work in providing meals for local families in need. (Courtesy photo)

Nov. 13 Jacob & Marissa Seldal (anniversary)	Nov. 22 Tim Dougherty Roy & Ronda Threlkeld (44th anniversary)	Dec. 1 Josh Perkins Kennedy Smith Brooks Bridgeman
Nov. 14 Jaelynn Sullivan Emma Slack	Nov. 23 Seth House Kevin & Katie Sherburne (anniversary) Carolyn Bieck	Dec. 2 Dylan Rosenbach
Nov. 17 Tim South		Dec. 3 Annabelle Sexton Ty Vongsiri
Nov. 18 Ethan Huff Jenna Jackson	Nov. 24 Brenda Jones	Dec. 4 Teresa Dodillet
Nov. 20 Tony Fry	Nov. 27 Makayla Ludwig	Dec. 6 Kelly Smith
	Nov. 29 Sam South	

Call 815-561-2151 to submit names for birthdays and anniversaries



Oct. 18 - Julie Richardson, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 19 - RACF, \$25
Oct. 20 - Brad Schabacker, Rochelle, \$50
Oct. 21 - Lucas Kammerer, Dixon, \$25
Oct. 22 - Julie Danielowski, Byron, \$25
Oct. 23 - Jesus Perez-Diaz, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 24 - Matt and Nicole Williams, Sycamore, \$25
Oct. 25 - Fred Warning, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 26 - Focus House, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 27 - Rochelle Chamber, Rochelle, \$50
Oct. 28 - Brenda Rainwater, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 29 - Norene Bunger, Rochelle, \$25
Oct. 30 - Rochelle Chamber, \$25
Oct. 31 - Amy Springmire, Rochelle, \$250
Nov. 1 - Sue Snyder, Phoenix, \$25
Nov. 2 - Ryan Neuenkirchen, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 3 - From the Heart, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 4 - Kimberly Lumzy, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 5 - Jeff Stevens, Excelsior, Minnesota, \$25
Nov. 6 - Taylor Thomas, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 7 - Angela Dobson, Stillman Valley, \$25
Nov. 8 - From the Heart, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 9 - Willow Frye, Paw Paw, \$25
Nov. 10 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$50
Nov. 11 - Fred Warning, Rochelle, \$250
Nov. 12 - Marcy Schnorr, Rochelle, \$25
Nov. 13 - Jeffrey Mann, Rochelle, \$25

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King Crossword

1 Platters
6 Chum
9 Club —
12 Put on — (act)
13 Expert serve
14 Navarro of
"The View"
15 Gettysburg
general
16 William on
"Star Trek"
18 Vatican term
20 Folklore mon-
ster
21 Blackbird
23 Airport
screening org.
24 Offered one's
seat

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
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55				56				57				

1 River blocker	tant
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ending	er
3 NPR's Ari	22 Rebel Turner
4 Musical finale	24 Madrid Mrs.
5 Used a broom	26 Went easy on
6 Computer	28 Japanese
language	seaport
7 Needing a	30 Bit of physics
massage	32 Hone

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by Linda Thistle

	2		7					4
4		5		9		2		
		1			8		3	
	6				5	4		
		7	8					5
8				3			1	9
	1				2	8		
5			3	1			7	
		9		8				6

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

RK SDF CMRVCSWP QGCHCQSWHL
CHW PHCDM FM SGW LCVW
QCHSFFM KHC VW, R'P QCUU
SGWV QWU VCSWL.

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6	4	1	7	5	8	3	9	2
2	7	9	4	1	6	8	3	5
3	5	8	2	9	7	4	6	1
8	6	7	3	5	1	2	4	9
5	3	1	6	4	8	7	9	2
9	1	4	5	2	3	6	7	8
4	2	8	9	3	6	5	1	7
7	5	4	2	8	1	9	3	6
3	2	8	7	5	1	6	9	4
4	9	6	3	7	2	8	1	5
1	5	3	7	4	8	5	2	6
2	8	4	6	9	1	3	7	5
5	7	9	3	1	4	2	8	6
6	1	2	5	8	3	7	4	9
3	4	7	5	6	9	2	8	1
9	2	8	7	5	1	6	9	4
4	7	5	6	9	3	2	8	1
1	5	3	7	4	8	5	2	6
2	8	4	6	9	1	3	7	5
5	7	9	3	1	4	2	8	6
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9	2	8	7	5	1	6	9	4
4	7	5	6	9	3	2	8	1
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5	7	9	3	1	4	2	8	6
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3	4	7	5	6	9	2	8	1
9	2	8	7	5	1	6	9	4
4	7	5	6	9	3	2	8	1
1	5	3	7	4	8	5	2	6
2	8	4	6	9	1	3	7	5
5	7	9	3	1	4	2	8	6
6	1	2	5	8	3	7	4	9
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2	8	4	6	9	1	3	7	5
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Solution time: 26 mins.

if two animated characters are drawn on the same cartoon frame, I'd call them cell mates.

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SPORTS



KISSACK MAKES STATE
RTHS senior swimmer Bryn Kissack will compete at the state championships.
See page 6 for more details

RTHS Football

Hubs take down Benet in second round

Defense forces three turnovers as RTHS beats Redwings 38-6 on Friday night

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — A bend-but-don't-break mentality fueled the Rochelle Hub varsity football team on defense during its second-round playoff matchup against Benet Academy on Friday night.

While Redwing quarterback Ryan Kubacki threw for 230 yards and one touchdown, Rochelle forced three turnovers on defense, including two interceptions, while capitalizing on multiple botched snaps and personal-foul penalties on Benet Academy. With their defense hanging tough, the Hubs continued to roll on offense, rushing for 327 yards and five touchdowns to beat the Redwings 38-6 and reach the state quarterfinals for the second time in three years.

"We executed well," said senior outside linebacker Ethan Goodwin, who totaled a team-high 12 tackles and forced a fumble in the win over the Redwings. "Coach [Kyle] Kissack tells us that we can bend and give a little bit, but we can't break. Whether they scored or they were close to the red zone, we stuck together and we were able to find a way out... Our game plan was to have at least two

explosive plays on offense and to force at least two turnovers on defense."

Rochelle (10-1, 4-1 Interstate 8) will face No. 3 seed Nazareth Academy in the quarterfinal round, with the game scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 16 at 1 p.m. The Hubs took the opening kickoff into Benet territory and scored on their first drive, which culminated with a 1-yard touchdown run from senior tailback Grant Gensler, who ran for a game-high 137 yards and four scores. Friday's victory marks the first time since 2003 that the Hubs have earned 10 wins in a single season.

"We're keeping our pads down on every play and we're doing our jobs," Gensler said. "It feels great, especially because we put a lot of hard work in over the summer and in years prior. Seeing that hard work pay off means a lot, especially since it's with the people I love the most."

Benet nearly scored on its first series of the game, but Gensler emerged from the free safety position and nabbed a clutch interception for the Rochelle defense, snagging a cross-body pass from Kubacki and returning the ball to near midfield. The Hubs took advantage of the defensive play, converting a fourth-and-2 down



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

A group of Rochelle Hub defenders, including junior Gavin Neale (No. 4), combine for a tackle on Benet Academy's Ryan Kubacki during Friday's varsity football game against the Redwings on Friday night.

and scoring on a 28-yard touchdown run from sophomore wingback Dylan Manning, who shook off multiple Benet defenders on the scoring play.

Down 16-0, Benet (7-4, 3-0 CCL/ESCC Purple) nearly cut the deficit to 10 points, but a long touchdown pass down the far sideline was negated by an offensive

pass interference penalty. The Redwings, who were ultimately forced to punt on the drive, fell behind even further after Gensler cashed in a 10-play, 82-yard scoring drive with a 2-yard touchdown up the middle.

Benet, who entered as the No. 7 seed in the north bracket of Class 5A, moved the ball down

to Rochelle's 2-yard line before a personal-foul penalty and a botched snap led to a sack by the Hubs as time expired in the first half. The Redwings finally reached the end zone midway through the third quarter, where Kubacki took a pitch on a trick play and fired a 17-yard touchdown pass to tight end Declan Walsh,

who soared over Manning to secure the grab.

The Hubs, who entered as the No. 2 seed, answered almost immediately, with Gensler following senior guard Kaiden Morris to the right side and sprinting down the near sideline for a 75-yard touchdown run.

See FOOTBALL page 2

RTHS Volleyball

Atkinson earns Interstate 8 All-Conference honors

Senior libero leads Rochelle in both digs and aces during 2024 varsity season

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Senior libero Dempsey Atkinson represented the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity volleyball team on the Interstate 8 All-Conference list this season. Atkinson earned First-Team honors for the first time after leading the Lady Hubs in both digs (358) and aces (38) this fall. Rochelle took sixth in the Interstate 8 Conference and finished with a 10-22-1 overall record.

"It feels really great because I like to be a role model for the underclassmen," Atkinson said. "I've never been an All-Conference player in volleyball before, so it's a nice feeling to go out with that award. I wanted to put my all into every play and I thought I did a really good job of that this year. I kept my passes controlled and I thought my serve receive was really great this year. I communicated with my teammates and I wanted to focus on building them up this year."

The 2024 season was Atkinson's fourth with the varsity team and her second as Rochelle's starting

libero. Atkinson primarily played as a defensive specialist before taking over the libero role during her junior season, when she posted a team-high 256 digs with 36 aces while helping the Lady Hubs win 17 matches. Atkinson totaled 177 digs and 29 aces as a sophomore.

"I feel like I improved both physically and mentally," Atkinson said. "If I made a mistake, I erased that from my brain and moved on throughout the game. I thought my serve improved and I didn't have as many errors this year. My passing was more accurate and I thought my mentality had more of an impact on how I played. I really enjoyed my teammates and their company. We had so many laughs in the locker room and practices were so much fun. They made my day better."

Atkinson is one of four senior starters who will depart from the varsity roster after this season. Rochelle will lose defensive specialist Emma Kennay along with setter Ali Ohlinger and outside hitter Taelynn Rodeghero, who each earned honors from the Interstate 8 Conference last



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Senior Dempsey Atkinson received All-Conference First Team honors from the Interstate 8 for the 2024 season. Atkinson led Rochelle in both digs (358) and aces (38) while helping the Lady Hubs to 10 wins.

fall. The Lady Hubs will look for their junior class, which includes middle blocker Audyn Kemp as

well as setter/right sides Jaydin Dickey and Meredith Bruns, to fill the leadership void next fall.

"My advice would be to enjoy every moment and don't take anything for granted," Atkinson

said. "You don't want to have any regrets and you want to say that you gave it your all."

SPORTS



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub varsity football team defeated Benet Academy 38-6 in the second round of the IHSA 5A Playoffs on Friday evening. At left, senior Jack Pavlak launches forward to tackle Benet's Martin Radgowski. At right, senior Elijah Harley leads a group of tacklers against Benet's Declan Walsh. Below, senior Grant Gensler runs with the football behind senior lineman Kaiden Morris.

FOOTBALL: Rochelle to face Nazareth Academy in quarterfinal round

From page 1

Leading 32-6, Rochelle made another key defensive play late in the third quarter, where a tipped pass on a fourth-and-3 play led to an interception by senior linebacker Brandyn Metzger, who had three tackles and one sack to aid the Hubs in the second-round win.

"We practice the tip drill every single day," Metzger said. "We always have to be ready in case the ball comes our way and I was ready at that moment. Coach Kissack set a goal for us to force two turnovers. It's a great feeling. We've played three Catholic schools in a row and we felt like this was a big test for us. Our plan was to stop the run and force them to pass because we knew the more passes they threw, the higher the chances were of them making a mistake."

Rochelle iced its victory with an 8-yard touchdown run from Gensler and a forced fumble during the fourth quarter, where Goodwin punched the ball free



from Benet wide receiver Ben Albert and junior linebacker Gavin Neale made the recovery. Neale

recorded seven tackles and a sack for the Hubs, who finished with three total sacks in the victory.

Manning rushed for 110 yards, while junior fullback Roman Villalobos added 60 yards on 12

carries for the Rochelle offense, which saw senior quarterback Carson Lewis complete 3-of-6

passes for 33 yards. Rochelle's defense recorded three tackles for loss in the win.

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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Bowling

Hubs return to the lanes for 2024-25 season

I-8 honoree Frye headlines varsity players

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Head coach Jim Lyles said he believes the Rochelle Hub varsity bowling team can win the Interstate 8 Conference this season. The team held its first practice of the 2024-25 season last Monday and is gearing up for its first tournament of the season this weekend. Rochelle will look to build on a 10-7 overall record and a 5-3 record in the Interstate 8 last season, when the Hubs took third in the conference tournament and placed second for the regular season. Senior Logan Frye headlines the varsity players back in the mix for the Hubs, who will head to the Super Bowl in LaSalle for the Mendota Invitational this Saturday. Frye has earned All-Conference honors in the Interstate 8 over each of the last two seasons. “I think we have a good chance to win the

conference,” Lyles said. “We have a solid group of six... Logan’s key will be picking up spares and staying focused. There’s no reason he can’t advance to the sectional and even make it out of the sectional this year. He has all of the tools.” The Hubs are welcoming back a trio of talented juniors including Levi Waddle, Caleb Mortensen and Declan McGee, who each bowled varsity matches last season. Sophomores Luke Norris, Bryson Stewart and freshman Josef Alanis are three underclassmen who could emerge at the varsity level for the Hubs, who will host their first home match against South Beloit on Tuesday, Nov. 19 before beginning Interstate 8 play against LaSalle-Peru on Thursday, Nov. 21 at home. “Our juniors need to continue to get better and focus on their spares,” Lyles said. “They’re a good group of young

men and they all seem to get along with each other, which is huge. These guys don’t have animosity toward anybody and they legitimately root for each other.” Rochelle will compete in multiple tournaments including the Mendota Invitational, which was held this past weekend, as well as the Guilford Invitational on Nov. 23, the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic on Dec. 14, the Freeport Sport Shot Invitational on Dec. 21 and the Interstate 8 Conference Championship on Jan. 13, 2025. The postseason will begin with the IHSA 2A Regionals in late January. “We were close to winning the conference last year,” Lyles said. “We have to focus on the small things. We lost a lot of matches by 20 or 30 pins and when we’re missing eight or nine single-pin spares in a match, that’s a lot of pins we’re leaving on the deck.”



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)
Senior Logan Frye has earned Interstate 8 All-Conference honors over each of the last two seasons. Frye is among the players back in action for the Hubs this winter. Rochelle opened its season at the Mendota Invitational on Nov. 9.

RTHS Girls Basketball



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)
Junior Jaydin Dickey is among the returning players from last season for the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball team, which started practices last week.

Lady Hubs back on the hardwood for second season under Gehm

Darby, Metzger highlight returning players

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Defense and effort were the emphases for head coach Jon Gehm during his first season with the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball program last winter. With most of their groundwork laid, Gehm and his staff will be looking for improvement on offense in year two. The Lady Hubs returned to the hardwood for their first practice of the 2024-25 season on Monday. Rochelle will look to improve on a 13-18 overall record and a 2-8 record in the Interstate 8 Conference last season. The Lady Hubs will need both newcomers and returning players to step up, as the team will be replacing several starters from last season including All-Conference guard Alivia Henkel as well as guards Kara Martinez and Sydney Tabor. “We have a hard working group and a lot of the girls were with us last year,” Gehm said. “They understand what we’re trying to

do here and I think there’s a different energy in the gym. The girls are staying positive and they’re working hard every day... We have to execute better this year. We relied a lot on our athleticism last year and we were able to push the ball because we had players like Alivia. We have to execute down low and we have good post players.” Senior forwards Kendyl Darby and Abby Metzger are two players back from last season who will take on leadership roles for the Lady Hubs this season. Junior guard Jaydin Dickey returns after earning a starting role last season, while senior guard Payton Cesarone and junior point guard Carmela Bright are two JV players who are expected to step up for the varsity team this season. “We want to make sure we put our guards in positions to score,” Gehm said. “We need to execute better in the half court and stay out of foul trouble on defense. I think we have good shooters on this team and we need to shoot more consistently than we did last year. We have some girls who are high-percentage shooters off the catch and we want to maximize that.” Junior guards Rose Luxton and Mary Chadwick are two more JV players who are expected to take on varsity roles for the Lady Hubs, who tip off the season at the Oregon Thanksgiving Tournament on Wednesday, Nov. 20. Rochelle’s home opener will be against Rock Falls on Dec. 5 and the Lady Hubs begin Interstate 8 play with a road game at Sycamore on Dec. 6. “We have to be more disciplined offensively and not turn the ball over as much,” Gehm said. “We need to understand what kind of defense is being thrown at us and where the pressure is coming from. We turned the ball over way too much last year, but if we can cut that down this year, we’ll be in good shape. We want to be playing our best basketball in February and compete for a regional championship. It’ll be a process and we need to get better every day.”

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ASHTON NEWS



Ashton-Franklin Center students learn about place value
Mrs. Reinhart's second grade class at Ashton-Franklin Center Elementary School recently used pumpkin seeds to learn about place value. (Courtesy photos)



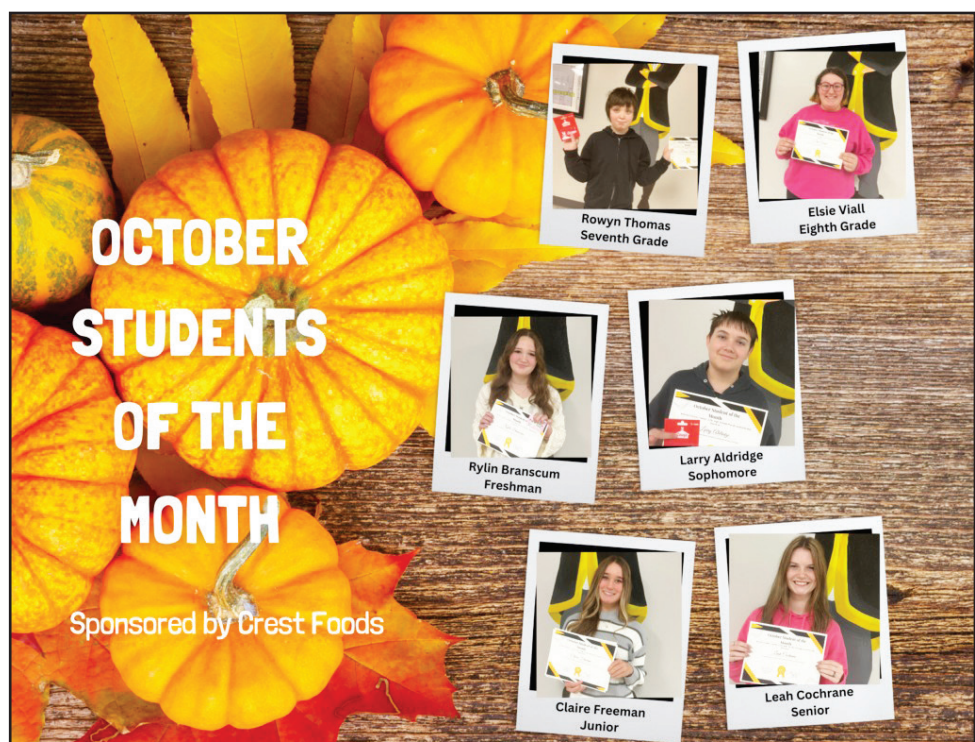
Freeman named AFC Raider of the Week
Congratulations to Claire Freeman for being selected as the Raider of the Week. "Claire was selected for always having a great attitude and approaching everything with her best effort!" a district Facebook post said.

ISP announces results of OREP locally

LEE COUNTY — Illinois State Police (ISP) Troop 1 Commander, Captain Joseph Blanchette, announces the results of Occupant Restraint Enforcement Patrols (OREP) held in Lee, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago, during October. These OREPs provided extra patrol coverage for the ISP so officers could focus on saving lives by making sure all vehicle occupants were buckled up.

Safety belt citations: 58. Child restraint citations: Three. Total citations: 127. Total written warnings: 26.

Most motorists know safety belts save lives, but some ignore their safety and that of their families by neglecting to use safety belts and child restraint devices. These patrols reinforce the occupant protection message by focusing on those who ignore the law. Lives can be saved if people simply "buckle up!" This project is funded through the Illinois Department of Transportation.



AFC School District names October Students of the Month
The Ashton-Franklin Center School District recently named its October Students of the Month. Students recognized included Rowyn Thomas (seventh grade), Elsie Viall (eighth grade), Rylin Branscum (freshman), Larry Aldridge (sophomore), Claire Freeman (junior) and Leah Cochran (senior). (Courtesy photo)

COMMUNITY MATTERS



AFC CUSD #275

Go, Raiders!

Ashton-Franklin Center Jr/Sr High School
611 Western Ave., Ashton, IL 61006
815-452-7461 | Malinda Hart, Principal

Learn★Grow★Thrive

Ashton-Franklin Center Elementary School
217 South Elm, Franklin Grove, IL 61031
815-456-2325 | Jenah Burkitt, Principal

Community Building

Mills and Petrie Memorial Building
Hourly, daily rentals for your event
815-453-5048

Funeral Home

Beverage Lyons Funeral Home
601 Richardson Ave., Ashton, 815-453-2441
beveragefamilyfh.com

Public Library

Mills and Petrie Memorial Library
704 First Street
815-453-2213

Real Estate

Lori Patterson Real Estate
811 Main St., Ashton
815-751-0510

Schools

Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD #275
611 Western Ave., Ashton
815-453-7461

Village Hall

Village of Ashton
810 Main St., Ashton
815-453-2241
www.ashtonil.com

Beverage Lyons Funeral Home

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307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

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ANTIQUES WANTED: I pay cash for antiques; furniture, glassware, pottery & crocks, tin & iron toys, sterling silver, decoys. If it's antique, I'm interested in looking! Call 815-562-2928 or email dickharms@hotmail.com

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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Rochelle senior Bryn Kissack competed in three events during the IHSA Girls Swimming & Diving Sectional at Byron on Saturday. Kissack, who competes in the athletes with disabilities division, qualified for state in all three of her events.

Kissack qualifies for IHSA State Championship in three events

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

BYRON — Bryn Kissack’s internal drive stems from the support of her family and her desire to prove what’s possible to both herself and others. Kissack demonstrated that drive on Saturday afternoon, when the Rochelle Township High School senior entered the water and raced to the finish during the IHSA Girls Swimming & Diving Sectional meet at Byron High School.

Kissack, who has spina bifida and competes in the athletes with disabilities division, swam three races including the 50-yard freestyle, the 100-yard freestyle and the 100-yard breaststroke on Saturday. Kissack medaled in all three events and she will represent RTHS in the IHSA State Championship meet for the third consecutive year. The IHSA State Championship meet will be held at the FMC Natatorium in Westmont this weekend. Kissack will swim on Saturday, Nov. 16.

“Sectionals are a big deal for me because that’s where I can prove myself and push myself to be my very best,” said Kissack, who’s now a three-time sectional medalist. “My goals have been to get better and faster each year... It’s a really big step for me because a lot of people support me and there are a lot of people I’ve looked up to in swimming. It’s a big deal for me to do this.”

Kissack completed the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 4:35.98, racing over a minute faster than she did at the sectional meet last year and beating her time from two years ago by nearly 50 seconds. Kissack clocked in with a time of 3:46.19 in the

100-yard freestyle and a time of 1:45.59 in the 50-yard freestyle. Although Kissack was the only swimmer with a disability racing at the Byron sectional, both her family and her determination proved to be big motivators.

“I’m the only one in the water when I’m swimming and time is my enemy,” said Kissack, who has two younger sisters (Reese and Tess) as well as one younger brother (Grange). “All of my siblings were there over the weekend and that meant a lot to me. It means a lot for my family to be so supportive in all of this... It takes practice and it takes motivation to become a better swimmer. My family is a big part of that and my family motivates me to do my very best.”

Kissack is Rochelle’s first three-time state qualifier in swimming since Allison Cole, who was a four-time state qualifier in the athletes with disabilities division from 2017-20. Kissack is also the school’s third three-time state qualifier over the last 10 years, joining Cole and Aubrey Headon, who qualified in the athletes with disabilities division three times from 2016-18. Kissack said she will be practicing at the REC Center in Rochelle this week in order to prepare for the state meet.

“It means a lot to me that I’ll get to experience the state meet once last time,” Kissack said. “It’s a great experience for me to have... I feel like I’ve gotten stronger and I feel like I’ve built more momentum each year with having the ability to swim harder and more effectively... It’s a big deal for me to go to state and I can prove to myself that I can swim competitively and win medals in something that I love dearly... My goal for this year is to finish in the top 5.”

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